

the majority through the distinguished majority leader reconsider allowing us to have a vote on the overtime matter. As I have stated, we can dispose of that with 10 minutes of debate on our side. There are some other amendments. We had 75. But we have told managers of the bill if we can work that down significantly, we would do that with each amendment; we could have a short time agreement. And we think we can dispose of this bill very quickly, which I hope through the intercession of the distinguished majority leader we can do.

I would simply refer to the chairman of the committee, Senator GRASSLEY. This is a quote from him where he said:

I prefer to vote on things up or down and move on. My feeling is sometime we have to face this issue. So we might as well face it now.

Added GRASSLEY:

If Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist had his druthers, it might be to give Democrats a straight vote on the amendment to allow the corporate tax bill to proceed.

I think Senator GRASSLEY, who is the sage farmer of the Senate, speaks as always with a lot of wisdom. I think those two sentences speak volumes. We need to vote on overtime and move on to this most important tax bill.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, let me very briefly respond.

The implication is one amendment is holding this bill up. It is not. Reference

has been made to overtime over the course of the day. As I said in yesterday's opening statement and closing statement, we are willing to consider other amendments on the bill that are really germane to the bill. It is not just one amendment. These are message amendments, and we have voted on overtime in the past. There are other amendments which the other side of the aisle wants to bring to make messages and to score political points. I notice it did start at 75, and maybe it is down to 15 or 12 or 10. It is not down to just one amendment.

I pledge to keep working both sides of the aisle to get it down to a manageable number. Nobody is locked down on what we will do or what we will not do. I want to be able to complete this bill by staying on the bill itself. There is going to be a lot of legislation coming through.

I believe we have a good agreement for tomorrow to proceed and finish that bill. I think next week we may be going to the welfare bill, if we can't come back to the JOBS bill.

There is going to be plenty of opportunity to offer these messages, politically driven amendments. This FSC/ETI Jumpstart JOBS bill is not the bill to do it on. It is an important bill. We need to finish it expeditiously. We have Members on record today who want to finish this bill as written. It came out of committee 19 to 2 under the excel-

lent leadership of Chairman GRASSLEY and Senator BAUCUS, who wants to continue to offer a whole number of message amendments—not just one, and not just two, and not just overtime.

I say all of that so there is no misunderstanding. I will continue to fight to get this bill through. I am disappointed by the vote today and by actions which have held that up. As majority leader, I need to keep the body moving along.

We are going to address, beginning tomorrow morning, a fresh issue on the floor of the Senate. I think we will have a very good debate, and we will complete action on that bill. If we can work through this, hopefully we can come back and address the JOBS bill in an orderly way. Then we can really have the end in sight and try to get it down to a manageable number of amendments that relate to the bill.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M.
TOMORROW

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in adjournment under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:20 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, March 25, 2004, at 9:30 a.m.